

U.S. Patent Application No. 10/042,549
Amendment dated August 28, 2003
Reply to Office Action of April 28, 2003

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph on page 16, beginning on line 12 and ending on line 18 with
the following amended paragraph:

9 , As stated earlier, alternatively, niobium billets can be made following the above-described extruding details. Accordingly, a niobium billet having a substantially uniform grain size is obtained. The preferred parameters for the grain size and other characteristics are the same as for the tantalum parameters provided above, taking into account the different melting temperature and other working conditions of niobium (e.g., extruding at lower temperatures, such as from about 1000 °F °C to about 1650 °F °C) that are known to those skilled in the art.